

### Happy New Year!



According to the Chinese Zodiac, the Year of 2010 is the Year of the Tiger, which begins on February 14, 2010 and ends on February 2, 2011. The Tiger is the third sign in the cycle of Chinese Zodiac, which consists of 12 animal signs. It is a sign of courage. This fearless and fiery fighter is revered by the ancient Chinese as the sign that wards off the three main disasters of a household: fire, thieves and ghosts.

### Important Announcements

Just a note that we update our home page quite often with important announcements. We update this area, located at the bottom of our home page when we have a scheduled system upgrade, service interruptions, virus threats that we think everyone needs to know about, and other important announcements. So keep your eyes on that area.

Remember that we also have a contact page on our website, you can fill out the form and it will send it right to our support ticket system that we monitor even on days off!

### How to Keep Your New Year's Resolutions

It's a stark irony of the Western calendar that the odometer turns over smack dab in the middle of winter—the one time of the year when most people can't rouse themselves to clean their bathrooms, much less make an ambitious, life-changing, behavioral U-turn. If you're the type who likes to ring in the New Year with an engraved list of resolutions, read on for hints about how best to keep them.

1. Aim low. It goes without saying that most New Year's resolutions are easier announced (or written) than done—but if you set the bar too high, you're doomed from the start. Instead of a sweeping declaration like "I will lose 30 pounds by April and finally fit into that dress," target a goal that's more attainable, like losing 10 or 15 pounds.

2. Don't overload yourself. It's difficult enough for the average person to follow through on one ambitious New Year's resolution; why on earth would you saddle yourself with three or four? Choose the most pressing issue at hand—losing weight, finding a girlfriend, improving your relationship with your parents—and concentrate on that. Trying to do everything simultaneously practically guarantees failure across the board.

3. Tell everyone you know. One school of thought says that New Year's resolutions are best kept to oneself, but look at it this way: the more people to whom you announce your resolution (say, to get out of your dead-end job by spring), the more people there'll be to prod you along if you fall behind. There's no shame in seeking help if you can't accomplish your resolution on your own.

4. Reward yourself. Following through on a New Year's resolution is rarely easy, so a little Pavlovian conditioning goes a long way. If you've resolved to shop less, stroke yourself for not buying those shoes by springing for a steaming hot cappuccino at the mall. If you've resolved to be nicer to people, buy yourself a nice jacket after enduring that tedious cocktail party without delivering any insults.

5. Wait until spring. Sometimes the best way to accomplish a New Year's resolution is to make it at a time of year of your choosing, rather than the one dictated by the calendar. May 1 is a good alternate date, since the change of season will neatly coincide with the change you're hoping to accomplish in yourself.

### Most Common New Year Resolutions

1. Spend more time for family and friends - This is the most common new year resolution taken by over 50% Americans. A recently taken survey shows that most people take a resolution to appreciate loved ones and spend more time with family and friends this year. Make plans to meet up with old friends at some restaurant and have a great time enjoying being with your friends. Or take your family out to some amusement park. Nothing like a picnic can bring joy and happiness in the family!

2. Become Fit - Becoming fit is the watchword among the people now. Why not spend some time for your body? Try to do some exercise to keep your body healthy. You don't have to spend hours everyday working out, experts recommend doing three 20 minute sessions of exercise per week for those starting out.

3. Cut down the Extra Fat - Over 63% of Americans are found to be obese according to research studies. Are you obese? Why not try to cut down that extra pound of fat? Try doing some exercise, go to the local gymnasium to shed some weight and avoid eating too much junk food. Setting a reasonable goal and staying focused are the most important factors in losing weight, and the key to success for millions of Americans who made a New Year's commitment to shed extra pounds.



4. Quit Smoking - If you have resolved to stop your smoking habit, then there are a variety of free support services, hotlines and smoking cessation classes to help you kick it out. Even if you've tried to quit before and failed, don't let it get you down. On average, smokers try about four times before they quit for good. Start enjoying your life, smoke-free!

5. Quit Alcohol - Have you decided to stop drinking? If you are having trouble trying to quit alcohol, then there is a host of help and support available to you. Most probably, there might be a local Alcoholics Anonymous group in your area. Try to get in touch with them. There are also a number of treatment-based programs, as well as support groups for families of alcoholics. Remember, you can quit drinking. So don't lose hope.

6. Get out of debt - The recent economic crisis hit everyone hard. Most of us are struggling to get out of debt. If you are in debt, then try to get out of it. Stop using credit cards unnecessarily because they charge a lot of interest (about 3% per month). Promise yourself not to use them except in

case of emergencies. Try to cut down on expenditure. Make sure you save some money regularly. You don't have to be completely stingy, just try to save a small amount regularly.

7. Learn something new - The saying goes "Known is a drop, Unknown is an Ocean". Admit it, we all know only a drop. Why not try to learn something new? Like trying to learn a new language, or taking a course in some skill or reading a new good book? It'll be worth the time you put into it. And you might find yourself enjoying the experience.

8. Become more organized - You'd find it on top of every new year resolutions list. Its very important too. Try to keep a daily planner or if you spend a lot of time with computers try to get a calendar software. Try to find out where you are spending more time and where you are wasting time. You can stop doing things which eat away time and become more productive. There are many tools available to keep track of your time. Google Calendar is a very useful free tool.

9. Help others - Helping others will give you joy and satisfaction. Volunteer for some activity this year. Why not help your local library, or spend time mentoring a child or donate something to charity? There are a lot of non-profit organizations working for good things. You can show your support by donating a little to them. For example, it will give you a deep sense of happiness if you donate some money to an orphaned child. It doesn't always have to be big. Helping others will give both yourself and others a great feeling of happiness.

10. Enjoy life more - We all have a hectic lifestyle. What will be the meaning of life if you don't enjoy it? Do something new and enjoyable. Read a good book, or take up a hobby, or go skiing. Remember, it is your life. You should enjoy it.

11. Go green - Because of scarcity, the price of energy sources are sky-rocketing. Instead of paying money to your power company, why don't you install a few solar panels or a wind turbine at your home? These alternative energy solutions are easy to switch to. There are plenty of DIY (Do-It-Yourself) guides available on the internet which you can refer to (use Google to search for them). This way, you can show mercy to both your wallet and the environment.

### Success Rate

Recent research shows that while 52% of participants in a resolution study were confident of success with their goals, only 12% actually achieved their goals. Men achieved their goal 22% more often when they engaged in goal setting, a system where small measurable goals are used (lose a pound a week, instead of saying "lose weight"), while women succeeded 10% more when they made their goals public and got support from their friends.